

25th Anniversary Symposium

Disability Etiquette & Awareness

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General Guidelines

- Myths about individuals with disabilities
- How to relate to and communicate with individuals with disabilities
  - Positive language
  - Put the person first





General Guidelines

Affirmative Phrases	Negative Phrases
Individual with a disability	The disabled; “handicapped”
Person who is blind Person who is visually impaired	The blind
Person who uses a wheelchair	Confined or restricted to a wheelchair
Individual with a psychiatric disability	Crazy; nuts
Person with an intellectual, cognitive, developmental disability	Retarded; mentally defective



General Guidelines

- Relax
- Treat the individual with dignity, respect and courtesy
- Listen to the individual
- Offer assistance but do not insist or be offended if your offer is not accepted





Communication Techniques

Individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

- Gain the person's attention before starting a conversation
- Look directly at the individual, face the light, speak clearly, in a normal tone of voice, and keep your hands away from your face.
- If the individual uses a sign language interpreter, speak directly to the person, not the interpreter.



Individuals who are Blind or Visually Impaired

- Speak to the individual when you approach
- Speak in a normal tone of voice
- Tell the individual when you are leaving
- Never touch or distract a service dog
- Do not attempt to lead the individual without first asking
- Be descriptive when giving directions

Individuals with Mobility Impairments

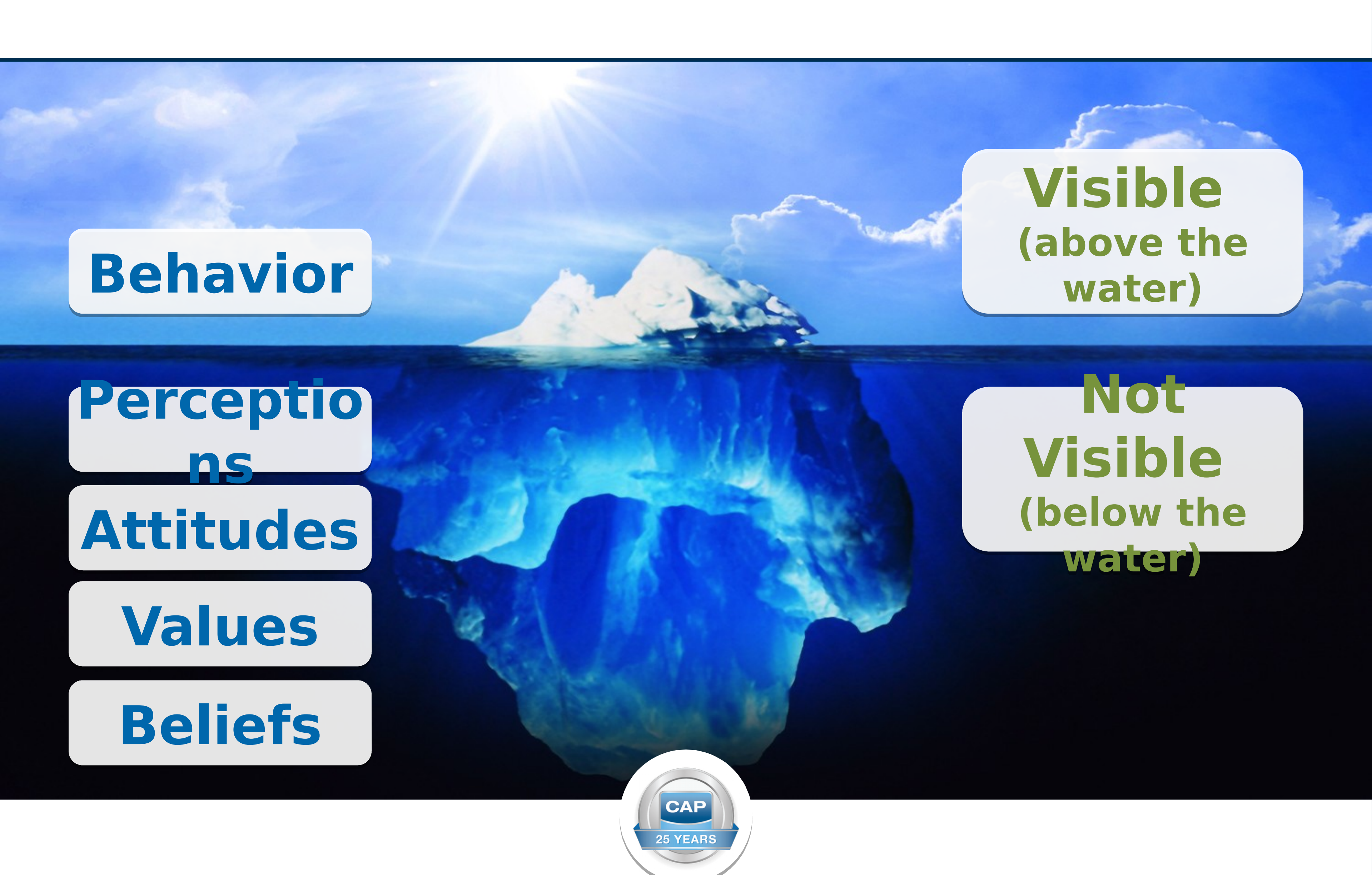
- If possible, put yourself at the wheelchair user's eye level
- Do not lean on a wheelchair or any other assistive device
- Never patronize people who use wheelchairs by patting them on the head or shoulder
- Do not assume the individual wants to be pushed — ask first
- Offer assistance if the individual appears to be
  ing a

Individuals with Cognitive Disabilities

- If you are in a public area with many distractions, consider moving to a quiet or private location
- Be prepared to repeat what you say, orally or in writing
- Offer assistance completing forms or understanding written instructions and provide extra time for decision-making
- Wait for the individual to accept the offer of assistance; do not "over-assist" or be patronizing

Diversity & Inclusion

Iceberg Analogy



Perceptions and Filters



- Perceptions – first impressions.
  - What is it?
  - Have I encountered something like this before?
  - What was the outcome?



- They are unique to us and our own personal filters.
- Our reactions to the world around us are based on these filters and perceptions.



Keep in Mind…

- We can all acquire a disability at any point.
- We are all alike in some way.
- We should accept and value differences.
- It is important for us to break out of our personal comfort zones.



